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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this project were to chart the processes by which an individual becomes a school administrator, to identify competencies the school administrator needs to perform his role effectively, and to develop a conceptual framework that lends itself to understanding the university's role in the overall process of training school administrators and its quest for a competency based educational administration program with applicability to the everyday administrative process. Interviews and questionnaires were used to gather data regarding formal and informal modes of learning the roles of a school administrator. A pilot study led to the larger research study. It was concluded that university training is embarrassingly deficient and ineffective; that informal models of learning, anticipatory and developmental socialization, are a more puissant manner for competency development; that the best characteristics of formal and informal modes of development must be merged--classroom techniques and theory must be supported by field internship experiences; that more university attention must be given to competency development in areas of individual improvement and human relations; and that more study must be completed for defining administrative competencies as curricula are developed.
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ROLE ACQUISITION AND COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS IN THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY

Dennis P. McCabe and Jack Compton

October, 1974

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Dr. McCabe is an assistant professor of education at Pan American University, and Jack Compton is a graduate student in educational administration. This research project was funded by the Faculty Research Council of Pan American University, Edinburg, Texas.

EA 008 761

ABSTRACT

"A STUDY OF ROLE ACQUISITION AND COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS IN THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY"

Focusing upon practicing school administrators in the Rio Grande Valley area and utilizing a competency based education framework, the purposes of this project were to (1) chart the processes by which an individual becomes a school administrator, (2) identify competencies the school administrator needs to perform his role effectively, (3) develop a conceptual framework that lends itself to understanding the university's role in the overall process of training school administrators, and its quest for a competency based educational administration program with applicability to the everyday administrative process.

Given the general performance based framework, certain questions were asked and answered regarding new directions taken by the Pan American University School of Education in the area of school administration. Some of the questions were: "How are students selected?", "How are they trained?" and "What programmatic structure best enhances competency attainment?"

Interviews and questionnaires were used to gather data regarding formal and informal modes of learning the role of school administrator. A pilot study was conducted which led to the larger research study. The pilot study for this project involved structured interviews of sixty-four (64) Valley administrators with emphasis on the formal and informal processes of becoming a public school administrator. A mailed questionnaire was developed and sent to two-hundred forty-one (241) administrators in a four-county area. The sample included principals and assistant principals at all levels, superintendents and assistant superintendents and central office administrators such as personnel and special program directors. This questionnaire was returned by one hundred seventy-one (171) respondents for a 71% return. The researchers followed-up these investigative techniques with twelve (12) non-structured interviews with graduate students, practitioners and college personnel, each lasting 60 to 150 minutes.

Participants in the study overwhemingly indicated that their formal training at the university was of little

or no consequence with respect to their performing their administrative roles. The participants' perceptions are that the role is "learned" both before and after role entry on the job in the actual school environment. School administrators develop their role competencies in the field—a live laboratory. Conclusions of the study are:

1. university training is embarrasingly deficient and ineffective,
2. informal modes of learning, anticipatory and developmental socialization, are a more puissant manner for competency development,
3. the best characteristics of formal and informal modes of development must be merged—classroom techniques and theory must be supported by field internship experiences,
4. more university attention must be given to competency development in areas of individual improvement and human relations, and
5. more study must be completed for defining administrative competencies as curricula are developed.

Pan American University should attempt to make their new found school administrator's program (two years old) more relevant to students' needs for developing role competencies by moving more and more into a strong field based approach. Additional strategies like gaming, role playing, CAI modules, simulation, and action research need to be stressed and combined with those proven traditional techniques. It is appropriate that internships should be lengthened with increased amounts of responsibility and authority given to students. It seems likely that in order for Pan American University to become a more effective vehicle for school administrators to learn their role, new programmatic and organizational structures need to be adopted.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank those who made the completion of this research possible. First, to the respondents who gave their time for our inquiry, we owe a debt of gratitude. It is sincerely hoped that their professional response will not go for naught, and that the findings presented herein might influence the quality of training for their future administrative colleagues. The project could never have been concluded without the financial support and cooperation provided by the Pan American University Research Council. Finally, assistance and encouragement from the Department of Secondary Education proved to be invaluable.

A special note of appreciation is extended to the Texas Association of Supervisors and Curriculum Developers and the Texas Professors of Educational Administration. This paper was presented at their 1974 Fall Conferences in Dallas and Commerce, Texas, respectively.

PREFACE

It was not the intent of the researchers to add superfluous fuel to the fiery inferno ignited by critics of educational training programs. Fashionable though it may be, criticism in and for itself lacks value as Godiva lacked modesty. Of paramount importance is the fact that evaluation and criticism must be followed with serious dedication to finding solutions. This summary can only highlight the general areas where attention to solutions must be centered. It is most obvious that piecemeal, "band-aid" solutions must go the way of the dinosaur. Whether aware of it or not, university curriculum designers have no divine immunity to the disease of extinction. In order to bring themselves into the society and needs of the twentieth century, they must set themselves to the task of organizational restructuring. The present skeletal structure remains standing supported shakily only by man's irrational obsession with maintaining the status quo.

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INTRODUCTION

The Texas Education Agency has recently emphasized the implementation of competency based teacher education programs in Texas. As is the case with many new programs prior to their implementation, many questions remain unanswered regarding the structure, goals and implementation process of such programs. All members of the teacher education profession share the responsibility of addressing themselves to these questions and attempting to find answers. Many educational programs are designed in the "ivory towers" of our universities, or in the bureaucratic offices of state and federal agencies. These sources for new programs are far removed from the classroom and the one-to-one teacher-student relationship, and are at times not conducive to fulfilling the real needs of students.

This study inspected the training of school administrators using graduate students, practitioners, and college teachers from South Texas as sources of data. Because of this study, new directions for the training program of school administrators at Pan American University are posited. These new directions for the training program represent the realities of the role of the school administrator to a greater degree than are now practiced. It was

assumed that the knowledges and experiences of graduate students and practitioners would provide great insight into the design and implementation of an effective competency based administrator education program.

PURPOSE. The primary objective of this research was to gain insight into how individuals become competent school administrators. Others have studied competent school administration but have limited their span of attention by focusing mainly on skills of the administrative role. As a result, they have found themselves cataloguing and defining a list of skills considered representative of administrative competence. It was the intention of the researchers to avoid this narrow interpretation and to widen this research focus to include the total process of becoming a competent school administrator. Therefore, in order to inspect the process of becoming an administrator not only must one ask "What is competence for the administrative role?", but also "How is the administrative role acquired?" The two ideas are inseparable. It would be intellectual arrogance to claim an understanding of "role competence" without also delving into the process of "role acquisition." Competence is primarily a by-product of the process of acquiring and playing a role. It is this process which ultimately defines school administration or, stated

differently, it controls the role behavior of school administrators. It directly determines which individuals become and remain school administrators—sometimes with striking disregard for actual role competence.

A series of field research techniques, including structured interviews, non-structured interviews, and mailed questionnaires were utilized. The data were gathered with the following specific objectives in mind:

1. to chart the processes, both formal and informal, by which an individual becomes a school administrator,
2. to identify the competencies a school administrator must have in order to perform his role effectively,
3. to develop a conceptual framework which lends itself to the understanding of the university's role in the development of school administrators, and
4. to provide insight and support to the university's school administration program in its quest for a competency based administrator education program having applicability to the everyday administrative process.

Within the general competency based framework, the basic question of how teachers become school administrators was asked. More specifically, how some teachers learn to become competent school administrators was asked.

Additional investigations along this line of inquiry are needed presently to identify potentially predictive variables from the experiential and expertise dimensions of school administration for Pan American University's administrative students. These identifications will allow those in charge to develop theoretical constructs and relationships for direction of the

administration program. This investigation was designed to meet some of these needs and to help the Pan American University, Department of Secondary Education develop a competency based school administrator's program founded on hard data tested in the field.

DESIGN. Two studies were conducted—a pilot study and a followup study. The pilot study was conducted in the fall semester of 1973. The data, findings, and conclusions from the pilot study gave impetus to the second and more comprehensive study.

The pilot study involved 64 structured interviews of school administrators.[1] At the time of the interviews, which lasted approximately 30 minutes each, the 64 subjects were practicing administrators throughout the South Texas, four county area. Besides providing descriptive and personal data, the structured interviews enabled the researchers to construct a mailed questionnaire, to design potential avenues of inquiry for the unstructured interviews, and to analyze the subjects' perceptions of competency areas for school administrators.[2] These initial interviews allowed the researchers to determine the administrators' feelings, attitudes, and perceptions about the training they received at the university and on the job. From data collected by these interviews, a second study was launched. By design, the second phase of the research depended upon two data

gathering techniques. First, a mailed questionnaire was developed, sent, and collected. Two hundred forty-one questionnaires were distributed to all school superintendents, high school principals, elementary principals and assistant principals in the four county area. A 71% return was realized. Second, twelve unstructured interviews were conducted. These interviews lasted anywhere from an hour to two-and-a-half hours in length. The interviews were conducted by both researchers, and the interviewees were graduate students, practitioners and college teachers of school administration. The resultant data from all techniques used were analyzed and are reported later in this document.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

From the outset of the project a theoretical framework was sought that would lend itself to inspection of social processes of role acquisition within an organization.[3] In their studies on school administration, Miller and Ortiz[4] recently utilized the concepts of ritualistic ceremonies, observed in most cultures as part of custom and tradition, to explain organizational mobility and role acquisition such as moving from the teacher role to the principalship. Their works are firmly based in van Gennep's Rites of Passage[5], as is this research.

A cultural anthropologist, van Gennep was concerned with the manner in which social groups, such as villages or tribes, adopt formal procedures to symbolize an individual's movement (passage) between highly defined roles. These procedures he refers to as "rites," and defines them as rituals, or ceremonies performed according to custom and tradition; their purposes are to signify passage between roles by an individual. Three distinct stages are recognized by van Gennep in the "rites of passage." He labels them the "rite of separation," the "rite of transition," and the "rite of incorporation." The individual must first leave or separate from a familiar

role, after which a period of transition occurs before he assumes or incorporates his new role. The transition period is seen as a stabilizer which serves to reduce the strain, or cushion the disturbance an individual experiences as a result of the ambiguity of role change.

Three stages of movement from one role to another are described by Chapple in the following way:

> The "rite of separation" consists of a marked decrease in the interaction rates of the individual within previous systems.
>
> The "rite of transition" consists of a marked increase in the interaction, often for a very long period of time in the institution in which he is entering.
>
> The "rite of incorporation" is when the period of conditioning is over, and the frequency of events have been built up to a constant rate. Incorporation occurs when the members of the group, including individual or individuals directly affected by the crises, begin to interact in their old systems of relations. [6]

The concept of "rites" are best envisioned as continuous processes unbounded by time and structure.

The process of separation initially begins when the individual makes his first decision to leave his current position (in most cases, a teaching position), and seeks a position in administration. As the individual attempts to acquire an administrative position, he is merging separation with the process of transition. During this transitional period he begins to look and act less like his previous role (that of teacher), and begins to display the actions and characteristics of his

sought role (that of administrator). Thus, while the individual is engaging in activities designed to secure himself an administrative position, he is at the same time, becoming an administrator. The process of incorporation occurs when the individual accepts an administrative position and begins "to play" his new role.

The individual begins as a teacher, with the characteristics and personality normally attributable to a teacher, who as a result of a process of transition and internalization, then assumes the manner and characteristics of an administrator. It is readily apparent that there are no distinct divisions in this process of change, that each process intertwines and merges with the others forming a complex system of role evolution. It must also be apparent that no two individuals will undergo this evolutionary process in exactly the same manner or order. Because of these complexities, van Gennep's "rites of passage" was an invaluable tool for conceptualizing, understanding, and explaining the informal processes which determine to a great extent how an individual becomes a competent school administrator.

SEPARATION. The rite of separation is the first process an individual must endure in his passage from the teaching role to the administrative role. The rite

of separation begins when the individual decides he wants to become an administrator. In most cases, (84% of the sample) the individual was a teacher when he first became interested in an administrative position. Most of the remaining 16% decided earlier in their lives (before being awarded bachelors degrees) to become school administrators. One respondent stated "it has always been my life's goal," and another said "since a child, I've always wanted to follow in my father's footsteps (as a school administrator)." Separation terminates when the individual leaves a teaching role and officially assumes an administrative position, that is, he becomes preoccupied with the rites of transition and incorporation.

The process of separation can be viewed productively in conjunction with March and Simon's "theory of organizational equilibrium."[7] Though these writers address themselves specifically to processes occuring in the business world and business-type organizations, their basic principles of human behavior are applicable to any social situation. The authors call their ideas a theory of motivation between an individual and the organization. They contend that the motivation to leave or to remain in the organization is dependent upon a balance between "inducements" and "contributions." Inducements they define as rewards given to the individual by the organization for his participation in fulfilling organizational goals.

Contributions are those activities or sacrifices which the individual makes for the organization. Of great importance in understanding this balance is the fact that the weight, or importance attached to each inducement and contribution is determined by the perceptions of the individual. An individual's perceptions are not necessarily representative of reality, yet those perceptions directly affect the motivational process. According to March and Simon, when an individual perceives his personal contributions to the organization are consistently greater than inducements received, he may opt to leave the organization. When the balance swings the other way, there is small likelihood that the individual would consider leaving the organization.

In applying the "inducement-contribution" concept to this study, an option for the individual is added as to why the teaching role is left and an administrative position sought. The original theory considers only the alternative of leaving the organization when contributions are consistently higher, while for this study it is suggested that many educators do not leave the organization but look "upward" rather than "outside." Using this framework, the teacher is viewed as an individual pondering the question of whether to move or not. He weighs the balance between his contributions to his school—the

organization—and the inducements he is receiving for his efforts. Basically he is asking himself, "Am I getting paid what I deserve?" Pay, or the inducements in this sense, is not solely measured in monetary terms, but represents a complex system involving such factors as prestige and status, power and influence, leadership, and service. An individual's contributions are likewise multivariate and may be measured in terms of such things as time spent, effort made, expertise, experience, teaching and decision making. The list of variables is limited only by the individual's perceptions and imagination. When the teacher decides he is being inadequately compensated by the school system he may decide to leave the education profession, or he may choose to advance himself within the system where inducements are more compatible with his needs. Through the equilibrium theory the processes occurring within this first rite of passage—separation—can be conceptualized.

TRANSITION. The rite of transition begins when an individual, usually a teacher, engages himself, consciously or unconsciously, in activities which eventually lead him to acquisition of an administrative role. The transitional phase is significant to this study of school administrators because within this rite three important

processes occur: (1) awareness, (2) administrative role acquisition, and (3) informal competency development.

Awareness in the transitional phase is closely related to the rite of separation. Once the aspirant has become committed to capturing the administrative role he becomes cognizant of rituals he must endure to increase his chances for receiving the promotion. Awareness occurs on two levels. First, there is awareness on the part of the individual who is preparing to capture an administrative position. Clearly, some subjects (administrators) did <u>not</u> consciously seek their position, as the following statements indicate:

> "I fell into it (principalship) unintentionally."
> "I was perfectly happy as a teacher when my principal asked if I was interested."
> "The opening just occurred and I was asked to fill the vacancy. I never really planned to ever be an administrator."

There is ample data that indicate, on the other hand, that some subjects were goal-oriented and consciously sought the administrative position. These aspirants sought administrative positions for various reasons such as better pay, more power, and greater challenge, to name a few. The point is that these individuals consciously engaged in activities that would help secure their administrative position, thus learning their "new" role and acquiring administrative competencies in the informal organizational setting.

Anticipatory socialization is a concept which describes the process of an individual becoming positively oriented toward a second group and seeking membership in this group. Anticipatory socialization is most valuable for inspecting the decision point by the subject to enter the positive reference group. Blood[9] found that principals began to learn their role long before they officially became a role occupant.

The aspirants who consciously sought their administrative positions also distinguished themselves through their attempts to "get the attention of superiors" (GAS).[10] Grifiths concluded, from his study of New York City teachers, that potential administrators exhibited a set of behavioral traits that were designed to GAS. Much evidence of such activity was recorded from subjects in this study.

Being seen by significant others is important to aspirants who move from teacher to administrator. Visibility is sought so that "elders", a la van Gennep, are aware of the aspirant's existence and merit. Coaches often receive much visibility. This may explain the unusually high number of former coaches in school administrative posts. Visibility for an aspirant can be provided by a sponsor.

A second type of awareness occurs within the organization by those who are in charge (either the formal or informal power structures or both). These sponsors often call the shots when it comes to hiring personnel for the school district. Rose inspected the phenomena of organizational and career sponsorship, and defined it thusly:

> Sponsorship refers to the active intervention of established persons associated with or members of the educational administration profession in the career lines of selected individuals who aspire to be or are public school superintendents. Such intervention is desinged to enhance the career progress of the selected individuals as they pursue a career in the public school superintendency.[11]

Miller found that individuals moved from teacher to principalship through one of three routes which are: (1) sponsored mobility, (2) contest mobility, and (3) political appointment.[12] Turner described sponsored mobility as an individual's movement up the organization based upon "who you know" and supposed merit, while contest mobility is similar movement, but is based on "the best man wins" concept or on observed merit.[13] In his novel, Serpico, Maas describes sponsorship among the New York City Police Department.[14] Sponsors are referred to as "rabbis" according to Maas. Sponsorship is an important concept that indicates awareness on the part of the organization of likely candidates for future openings in the administrative ranks.

In sum, many aspirants are aware that they aspire to become administrators, while others are not. It is apparent that the organization too, has several ways in which to operate with or react to aspirants (e.g., providing visibility, sponsored mobility, and political appointment).

Through the social processes outlined above, individuals not only acquire their administrative role, but also begin to develop administrative competencies. GASing, developing a sponsor-sponsoree relationship, increasing one's visibility aid the aspirant in his quest for administrative competency and position. These rites as well as those outlined earlier constitute the process of transition.

INCORPORATION. The rite of incorporation is manifested initially by entry into the administrative role. The degree of incorporation does not seem to be as positively correlated to length of time spent in the administrative role as one might think. However, there are definite changes in many of the subjects' views of their role and their role competence as time allows for job development. Ortiz[15] in her study of professionalization of female physicians identified the "partial incorporation" phenomena and delineated role incorporation[16] along a role-taker, role breaker continum. McCabe

noted the import of developmental socialization which was shown to be a strong mode for internalizing the principalship once the individual captured the role.

A second construct was used to analyze the upward movement from teacher to administrator. In conjunction with the rites of passage, movement from role I to role II was considered to be a function of formal and informal routes. The formal route to the administrative position is clearly related to the recognized and accepted mode of administrative training. This recognized mode of role learning and role acquisition consists of the aspirant taking coursework at the university, obtaining state certification, obtaining a degree, attending workshops, seminars, in-service programs, and participating in professional organizations and their respective meetings and conventions. Although formal role learning is necessary (certification), it is not necessarily sufficient for role acquisition and/or role competence.

The other type of role learning occurs outside the formal structures and focuses much more on the actual position in the field. The informal mode, in general, occurs during the day-in, day-out exchanges between the aspirant and his school environment. Many of the subjects interviewed suggested their superordinates

provided good models for them as they observed and formulated their definitions of school administration. In general, this phenomena of learning the role outside formalized channels, which are set by society, state and profession, can be partialed, and therefore can be better understood through constructs such as anticipatory socialization, contest mobility, sponsored mobility, visibility, and GASing.

FINDINGS

Data from the pilot study (N=64) and the mailed questionnaire (N=171) are presented before the information from the unstructured interviews is reported. These data that are presented first provide descriptive information from which an administrative profile is developed. Statistical analyses are also presented which suggest significant and non-significant relationships between a variety of factors. Lastly, findings are presented from interviews which emphasize and contrast the formal and informal modes of administrative role acquisition.

PILOT STUDY. The average number of years these subjects had been in education was 18.6, while their mean years in school administration was 9.1. The mean age was 43.5 years (This compares to 47 years from the mailed questionnaire sample.). Of the 64 participants, 55 were male and 9 were female. Eighty-six percent of the participants were male (This compares with a 91% rate from the mailed questionnaire sample.). Ethnically the makeup of the sample was 53% non-Mexican-American and 47% Mexican-American (This compares with 61% and 39% rates respectively from the mailed

TABLE I. The Number and Types of Administrators Interviewed

Superintendency	
Superintendent (2)	
Assistant Superintendent (2)	
Total	4
Middle Management	
High School Principal (6)	
Assistant High School Principal (11)	
Total (Secondary)	17
Elementary School Principal (27)	
Assistant Elementary School Principal (3)	
Total (Elementary)	30
Other (Special Program Directors, Supervisors, Co-ordinators, etc.)	
Total	13
	N = 64

TABLE II. Size of School (ADA) Represented by Subjects

School Size (ADA)	N*
100 - 500	17
501 - 1000	24
1001 or more	10
Total	51

*Thirteen subjects' responsibility involved more than one school and are not included in this tabulation.

TABLE III. Years of Experience for Subjects

	Group Mean	Female Mean
A. Age	43.5	54.0
B. Total Yrs. in Ed.	18.7	26.8
C. Total Yrs. in Sch. Admin.	9.1	12.6
Difference (B — C)	9.6	14.2

TABLE IV. Major Area of Study in College

Undergraduate Major	N*
Elementary Education	13
Physical Education	11
Social Studies	8
Business Administration	6
Secondary Education	5
Vocational Agriculture	5
Total	48

*This total is unequal to the total sample because other academic areas of major study, such as, mathematics, English, and biology were reported by respondents less than three times each.

questionnaire sample.). Tables I through IV summarize additional data from the pilot study. Interestingly, it was found that of the 64 respondents' parents (N = 128) only 7 received college degrees; 111 never attended college; 90 received less than a high school education; and 57 received less than a sixth grade education.

Clearly, teaching and administration can be seen as upward mobility for lower socioeconomic individuals as measured by education level.

MAILED QUESTIONNAIRE. From the mailed questionnaire it was discernable that many administrators are place-bound. The mean number of years spent in the present school district was 14. Interestingly, the mean years the respondents spent as teachers was 9. Translated into the informal process of role acquisition, individuals wait roughly 9 years before making their move toward the administrative role. In other words, the aspirants on the average take nine years to view and define the administrative role from the subordinate's perspective. The mean years the respondents had been in school administration was 13.

Of those subjects who held masters degrees in school administration, and who responded to the mailed questionnaire, 48% received their degrees from Texas A & I University, Kingsville, Texas. Figure I indicates by 10 year intervals a percentage distribution of masters degrees received. Table V provides an account of administrative types and the degree of their participation in the study. The usable responses number 115 for this as well as other tabulations because of incomplete questionnaire

FIGURE I. Distribution of Administrative Masters Degrees Received

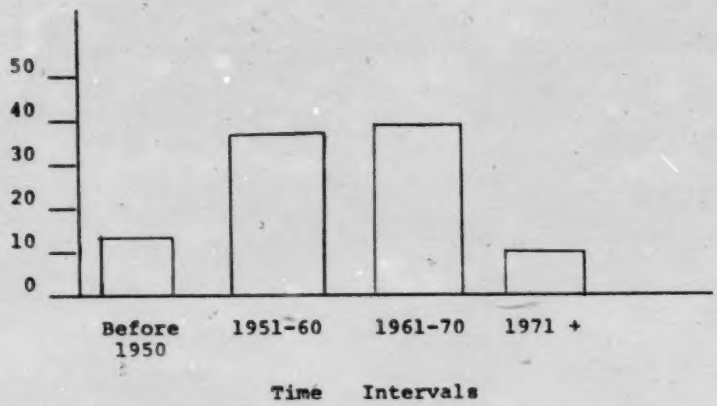


TABLE V. A List and Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Positions

Administrative Types	Number	Percentage Responding
Elementary Principal	52	45
Junior High Principal	12	11
High School Principal	14	12
Other Administrators	7	6
Assistant Superintendents	7	6
Superintendents	23	20
Total	115	100

forms. Most of the respondents in both the pilot study and the follow-up study were elementary principals. Approximately 20% of the respondents were superintendents; this is surprising when one considers that superintendents made up only 8% of the original sample.

COMPETENCY AREAS. The respondents in the pilot study (N=64) were asked to rank in terms of importance certain competency areas. The resultant order with respect to importance for the school administrator and the mean of each competency area are reported in Table VI. The lower the mean, the more important it was viewed by the subjects. The respondents were asked to add other competency areas to the list if they so desired. It is important to note that 3 out of the top 4 competency areas (Staff Relations, Working with Students, and Political Skills) involve working with people — human relations. As a follow-up to these findings, respondents

TABLE VI. A List of Competency Areas for School Administrators Ranked in Order of Importance (N=64)

Competency Area	Mean Score
1. Staff Relations	1.7
2. Curriculum Development	2.9
3. Working with Students	3.3
4. Political Skills (PR)	4.8
5. School Finance	5.2
6. Record Keeping	5.6
7. School Law	5.9
8. TEA/USOE Regulations	6.0

of the mailed questionnaire were asked (1) to indicate in rank order those competency areas in which they felt most skillful and knowledgeable, and (2) to indicate where they developed their skills, at the university or on the job. Table VII reports the same competency areas listed in Table VI, but in order of perceived competence by respondents. Also, a percentage is reported to indicate the degree or extent of the competency areas developed on the job or at the university. It can be easily seen that several differences exist in the order of the competency areas between Tables VI and VII. For example, Record Keeping and Curriculum Development almost reversed positions; that is, Curriculum Development is viewed as very important, but most administrators feel that

TABLE VII. A list of Competency Areas in Order of Perceived Competence and Where Competence was Developed

	Competency Areas	Competency Score	Where Developed	Degree of Development
1.	Working with Students	4.4	job	87%
2.	Staff Relations	4.3	job	91%
3.	Record Keeping	4.1	job	86%
4.	Political Skills (PR)	4.0	job	87%
5.	TEA/USOE Regulations	3.7	job	91%
6.	Curriculum Development	3.6	university	53%
7.	School Finance	3.4	job	52%
8.	School Law	3.0	job	52%

they are more competent at Record Keeping which is viewed as less important. Respondents viewed the human relation areas (Working with Students, Staff Relations, and Political Skills) as very important and felt they were very competent in these same areas. It is important to note that courses at the university in school law, school finance, and curriculum development fall short in terms of providing administrators with confidence and knowledge when compared to other competency areas. Only Curriculum Development was noted as being learned mostly as the result of university efforts (53%). However, the reader should be aware that items 6, 7, and 8 from Table VII are all very close to a near equal percentage split between on the job and at the university as to where the competencies were developed by respondents. All other items (1 through 5), however, were clearly perceived to have been developed on the job, which is a strong case for the informal mode of learning the administrator's role and developing competence.

STATISTICAL TREATMENTS. Several correlations were computed to measure possible strong relationships. One of these relationships was between administrative types and degree of perceived competency in certain competency areas. Significant correlations were calculated between Record Keeping, Curriculum Development, School Finance

and administrative type for 115 subjects. It was found that elementary principals felt much more competent at record keeping than superintendents ($r = -.347$). These same principals indicated a higher competency level in Curriculum Development than the superintendents ($r = -.230$). However, superintendents scored themselves to be much more competent than elementary principals in School Finance ($r = +.190$). Similar calculations on other competency areas and administrative types did not result in signigicant correlational coefficients at the .05 level. Further investigations were made on those significant relationships reported above through the use of *t*-test statistical treatments. A significant difference in the means was calculated between School Finance competency scores for superintendents and elementary principals ($t = 2.07$, $p < .05$). A significant *t* ratio ($t = 4.60$, $p < .01$) was calculated for differences in the means on Record Keeping competencies between superintendents ($\bar{X} = 3.39$) and elementary principals ($\bar{X} = 4.35$).

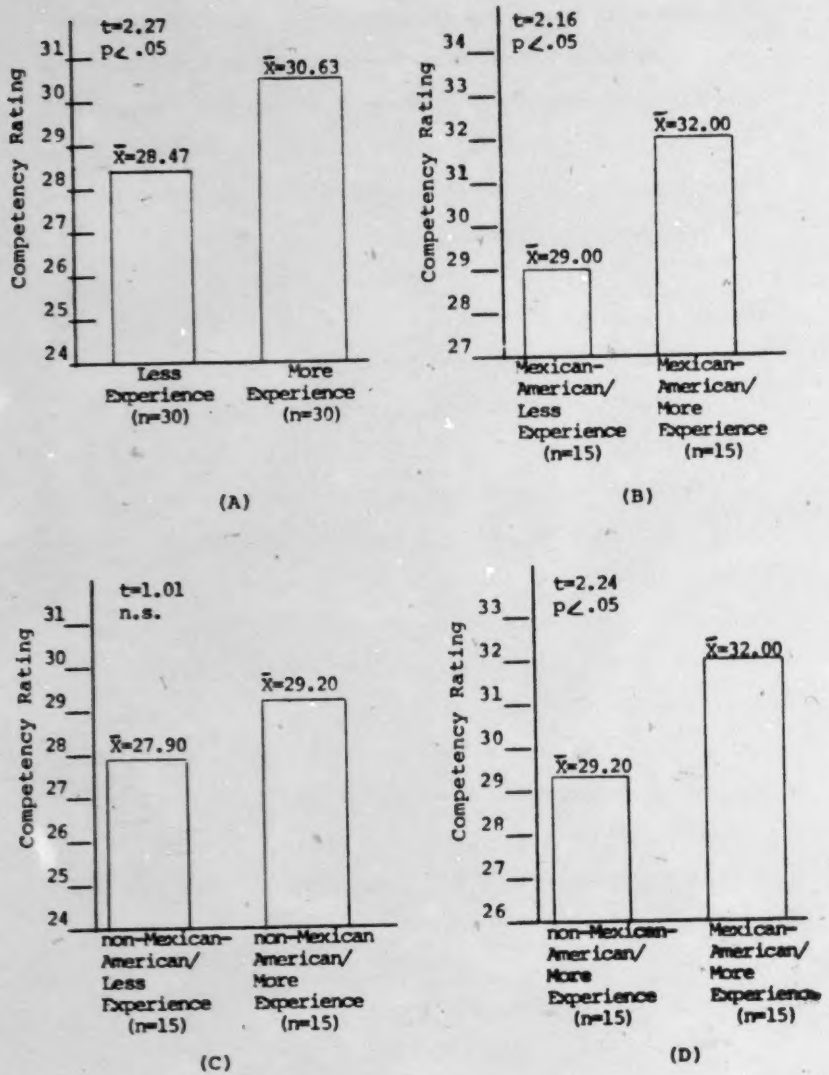
It was thought that lenght of time spent in the office, or experience in the role, would influence competency ratings. Also, ethnicity (Mexican-American versus non-Mexican-Americans) was posited to influence significantly the subjects' perception of their competence. Figure II graphically depicts the results of

four *t*-tests. The graphs are labeled A through D for clarity. An overall rating was calculated by summing the scores from the eight competency areas outlined in Tables VI and VII. Graph A indicates that more experienced administrators perceived themselves to be much more competenct than those with less experience. These subjects (N = 30 for each group) were randomly assigned from the total group of respondents. More experienced principals were those who had 10 or more years of administrative experience, while those labeled as less experienced had 5 or less years of administrative experience. The *t* ratio was calculated to be 2.27 which is beyond the 0.05 level of statistical significance.

Graph B shows a significant relationship ($t = 2.16$ and $p < .05$) between Mexican-American administrators with less experience and Mexican-American administrators with more experience with respect to their over-all feeling of competence. The more experienced group of Mexican-Americans felt much more competent than the less experienced group of Mexican-Americans.

Interesting contrast between ethnic groups is apparent when the results of Graph B and C are inspected. Among non-Mexican-American groups (Graph C) of less and more experienced administrators there is not a significant

FIGURE II. Overall Feeling of Competence Compared with Respect to Experience and Ethnicity



difference (t = 1.06) between their means. Although they are not included in Figure II, calculated t ratios indicate that there were no difference in the means between less experienced Mexican-American and non-Mexican-American administraters. These data suggest that experience in the administrative role has a greater influence on Mexican-American administrators than on non-Mexican-American administrators.

Graph D depicts a significant difference in the means (t = 2.24) between two groups of more experienced administrators. Over time in an administrative role, Mexican-Americans perceive themselves to be much more competent than their non-Mexican-American colleagues.

More investigations were conducted on the ethnic dimension. The following t-tests were computed using 17 Mexican-American subjects and 68 non-Mexican-American subjects. For each of the three significant t ratios reported below, Mexican-American subjects generated the higher mean, which indicates a greater perceived competency level by these respondents. Mexican-Americans felt more competent in Political Skills ($t = 2.45$, $p < .05$), in Curriculum Development ($t = 2.09$, $p < .05$), and in overall competence ($t = 2.81$, $p < .01$).

INTERVIEW DATA. Much of the data gathered through the use of interviews focused upon the questions "How did you become an administrator?" and "How did you develop your administrative skills?" In the pilot study respondents were asked "Which do you consider has been most valuable to you—practical experience or coursework?" Fifty-seven out of sixty-four respondents indicated that practical experience was more valuable to them as administrators. Only two subjects said university courses proved to be more valuable, while five subjects rated equal important to each choice. An overwhelming majority of the subjects (92%), agreed that the best teacher of administration is experience. The mean percentage of the responses to the question "What percentage of your skills were acquired in university administration courses?" was 34. Stated differently, one third of the samples' administrative skills were developed in conjunction with university courses. In response to the statement "My university coursework contained too much theory.", 49% agreed. Finally, tabulations of responses to "Most of what I know about my job, I learned—in my university coursework, since becoming an administrator, or as a teacher, etc." were made. Only 4% of respondents chose university coursework; eighty-one percent indicated since becoming an administrator; and 15% rated their

teaching experience as most helpful. The trends are clear. University training programs are viewed by those administrators sampled as ineffective and highly inferior to their field experience with respect to competency development. Through informal channels the normal observations of, and exchanges with the school environment, and experiences in the administrative office are extremely important to new administrators. Administrators are trained in the field at their school as role occupants.

Because the informal route to the administrative office and the experiences in the office after role entry are viewed as essential, much interview inquiry centered on the social processes involved in moving from teacher to administrator.

JOB ACQUISITION. Methods of job acquisition varied among the interviewees. However, various techniques were used repeatedly by aspirants to capture the administrative role. The strategies that were most often employed by the interviewees are as follows: sponsorship, political appointment, visibility, and mastery. There is one method to the administrative ranks that cannot be classified as a strategy, but it merits reporting. Some individuals claim to have become school administrators simply through fate, fortune or destiny. These individuals

unpremeditatedly were cast into the administrative role; in fact, when they first accepted an administrative position they had no graduate coursework toward administrative certification. But, most of the aspirants who reach the administrative position employ a combination of those strategies mentioned above.

Perhaps the strategy used most often to capture the administrative role is some form of sponsorship as the following quotes indicate:

> "I was asked to take the co-ordinator's job by (Jim) whom I knew (at the university)...so I took it." (subject #7)
>
> "My principal resigned to accept a better position. She recommended me." (subject #6)

The sponsor-sponsoree relationship is recognized to be instructional for aspirants also, as can be generalized from the following:

> "The principal started training me and pointing out things about the job-advice, reports-to show me what its all about..." (subject #4)
>
> "I helped the principal in his office on Saturdays with records. I was gradually given responsibility by the principal, and as a result got my job as principal." (subject #1)

Some of the interviewees suspected but could not show that they were sponsored to their role by another organizational member. Some respondents indicated firmly that they did not have a sponsor. One subject indicated a sponsor-sponsoree relationship which proved to be fruitless, and

therefore was instrumental in the sponsoree's movement to another school district. The sponsor-sponsoree relationship does not end with role entry—it continues, as indicated by the following quotes from an assistant principal.

> "I would not move for another principalship position. I will stay here, even if it means moving back to being a teacher. I have reason to believe the principal (the sponsor) may be superintendent in two years. I'm looking forward to being principal." (subject #3)

Because school boards are made up of elected officials, and because school districts are political subdivisions established by the constitution and legislature, politics pervades our educational system. It comes as no surprise that political processes are institutionalized in our schools and affect role acquisition. One subject indicated he was "approved" by the board before role entry. This is significant because local political turmoil had recently created several administrative vacancies—one of which was filled by him. Another subject became a principal in a school district where he had been elected earlier to its Board of Directors. Political appointments do influence some aspirants' career patterns.

Organizational visibility is another technique used by administrative hopefuls. Coaching provides high visibility in school districts and in communities for mentors.

Many of the interviewees in the pilot study (44 percent of all males) had coached prior to accepting an administrative position. In order for some aspirants to become visible, they GAS. These efforts are designed to "get the attention of superiors." Aspirants will take on added organizational responsibilities without pay. Activities which aspirants engage in to GAS and gain visibility may originate through various means, such as by volunteerism, or by special election. These types of efforts are indicated in the following:

> (As a teacher)...I never left before 4:00 o'clock; if there was anything to be done, they knew I'd take care of it. I never asked for any compensation for it. I was doing these things as a teacher and I'm still doing it (sic) as a principal. (subject #3)

Many other subjects indicated they had been involved in GASing activities. One subject was designated as a special functions supervisor coordinating carnivals, science fairs, and the like. Another subject became known as the school's "jack-of-all-trades," for he effectively took care of office work, carpentry, plumbing and painting in the schools. Obviously, competencies are developed through this role-capturing strategy.

Several subjects indicated their capture of the administrative position to have been dependent heavily on visibility gained through civic work. In fact, one respondent claimed that:

> "If I had not been active in these areas (civic work), I would never have been asked to become an administrator."

As an aspirant moves toward his first administrative position, he has several, if not many, chances to indicate to officials in the school districts what he does best and/or exhibit his newly acquired skills. Some aspirants depend heavily on their demonstrated competence to acquire their administrative role. This competence can be in teaching, human relations, political skills, knowledge of office routine, knowledge of the community, or any number of other areas. These competencies become contributions that the aspirant can make to the school district. For example, one subject indicated that:

> "I learned that consistency is the word. I learned also, how to compromise." (subject #2)

It can readily be seen that "consistency" and "compromise" was something that was valued highly by the organization; and that Subject #2 not only learned this, but incorporated these qualities in order to be able to contribute to the organization's wishes. One respondent said his superintendent told him that the interviewee was hired because he was energetic, intelligent, enthusiastic, and fairly well read. Another interviewee indicated his love for the classroom and kids. Also he feels that good administrators

need to be competent teachers first, as the following quote indicates:

> "An administrator should be a skilled teacher. He should know how to handle himself in the classroom." (subject #2)

Still another subject spoke of a general competence as a way to the administrative role. He indicated that most administrators had proven themselves in the school and community before they received their first administrative appointment. Many of the subjects interviewed indicated that they acquired the administrative role mainly because they had mastered some skills. Their promotion was to some extent based on merit, or their mastery level of administrative skills.

From the interview data emerged four major strategies used by aspirants to acquire administrative positions: (1) sponsor-sponsoree relationships (sponsored mobility), (2) political appointments and support, (3) organizational and civic visibility, and (4) demonstration of administrative competencies (merit, or contest mobility). These strategies, which are by no means considered exhaustive of the possible processes determining role acquisition, are not utilized independently by aspirants but are more often used concurrently in varying degrees. These strategies are inter-related and success in role acquisition is often dependent on the simultaneous utilization of several strategies.

COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT. Depending heavily on field encounters, aspirants become more familiar with the administrative position, but not necessarily more competent for that position. It is important to make this point because there are many administrators who have been exposed to similar informal and formal training, yet they are deemed incompetent. The fact still remains, however, that the competent administrators have high regard for the administrative training, especially via the informal route. Therefore, it is of great import that competency development for administrators be dissected, especially along the experiential dimension.

Most administrative competency development occurs in the field and not in university certification programs. Competency development by informal means occurs at various times and in a variety of circumstances. Informal routes to job acquisition such as sponsorship, GASing, and visibility represent arenas where administrative competencies are developed. A sponsor is often directly involved in competency development of potential administrators. He may appoint the aspirant to an interim position, such as department head, where the aspirant is gaining experience and being evaluated for promotion. As mentioned earlier one subject indicated his learning a great deal from his sponsor and their relationship. By engaging in GASing

activities and by functioning in positions which bring visibility, the aspirant is also developing new administrative competencies. One subject began to understand working with and providing leadership for parents and PTA groups as he co-ordinated the school's fall carnival (GASing). Another interviewee, in his GASing activities, learned about textbook adoption as a member of the state textbook committee (visibility), learned about Southern Association Accrediation as a science evaluator for an accreditation visiting committee, and learned about the Texas State Teachers' Association as a TSTA representative. Clearly, competency development and job acquisition are inseparable, yet they represent two distinct goals for the aspirant.

Just as there are strategies employed by aspirants designed to acquire administrative positions, there are techniques used to enhance administrative competency development. The methods which emphasize the development of administrative skills that were identified in this study are: (1) modeling superordinates, (2) performing administrative-like duties, (3) becoming certified for school administration, and (4) learning the job after role entry.

Several of the interviewees indicated that their principals provided modeling behavior for them to follow, that is, they copied their principal's behavior. They developed their administrative skills by mimicing their superiors, as indicated by the following:

> "I think to some extent I modeled myself after the high school principal. I adjusted my personality to what I learned from him." (subject #9)

> "Most administrators follow (model) the people they worked under and how they did it." (subject #7)

Along the same line, one subject, a graduate student, indicated his desire to be exposed to a good model by stating that:

> "I would like to be an assistant principal to a really good principal to learn from him." (subject #2)

Subject # 4 recognized the influence of her principal on her competency development. She states:

> "The principal started training me and pointing things out about the job (principalship), like advice, reports, problems with parents, staff problems, and teacher conflicts. He gave me practice in making decisions to show me me what its all about." (subject #4)

The fact that most respondents could describe their superiors in detail as being a perfectionist, a good thinker, and calm, suggests aspirants closely observe their superiors' office behavior. In fact, several

respondents indicated certain techniques used by their superiors as being poor or inappropriate. Such observations, then, can show an aspirant what not to do, as well as what to do.

Many of the subjects picked up some of their skills by performing certain administrative-like duties. For instance, several of the interviewees has been department heads, committee chairmen, and officers in professional organizations. These experiences proved helpful to most of the subjects with respect to their competency development. Many of these administrative-like duties are the result of the aspirant being placed in/or volunteering for a temporary position. Some of these temporary positions reported by respondents are director of a summer recreation program, department head, one-half of an assistant principalship, co-ordinator of the annual staff barbeque, assistant director of a bilingual program, and a participant in a teacher corp program.

Subject #7 as a program director for a summer recreation program indicated that:

> "I did a little bit of everything. I helped prepare budgets, student scheduling, and balanced financial books." (subject #7)

As a member of the teacher corp one respondent "...learned about all the aspects of the school hierarchy by working with principals, supervisors and directors." Still another

interviewee was given an assistant directorship in a bilingual program at her school, and she indicated that it helped her with budgeting, program evaluation, and writing reports.

Subject #5 worked with the Texas Education Agency one summer and had a chance to work with many superintendents, regional directors, principals and teachers. As a result he "...got to see the overall program from top to bottom."

These informal field experiences not only provide for competency development for the individual, but also function as a "testing ground" for the organization. Thus, interim positions such as those outlined above offer sponsors, personnel directors, and superintendents many opportunities to evaluate the aspirants' performances in administrative-like roles.

A third and formal method which affords the aspirant a chance to acquire skills for the administrative role is attending the university. Through coursework, workshop, and inservice programs, aspirants learn about their prospective roles in school administration.

One respondent went to graduate school as a full-time student. Occupying the role of principal in a large high school, he indicated "...college helped me in planning mostly, you know, the systems approach." Another respondent

indicated that once he completed his masters degree program he asked for the job (assistant principalship), was prepared for it, and got it. Subject #7, on the other hand, indicated that the most important aspect of his university experiences was the people he was exposed to and that he often learned as much from informal conversations with the professionals as from the coursework. Several respondents considered course projects done in group situations with close peer interaction as extremely valuable.

The respondents indicated that the university's greatest influence on their competency development was in the following areas: (1) the development of theories of leadership which enabled them to form guidelines for practical decisions, (2) the clarification and formation of a philosophical base from which to work, (3) the opportunity to share techniques and methods of solving common problems, (4) role-playing, (5) peer group interaction, (6) on-site visitations and field research, (7) the opportunity to learn from the experiences of professors with extensive backgrounds in school administration, and (8) positive reinforcement concerning practices in which they had already been engaged as an administrator.

There were some negative comments about the certification process that are worth noting. Some aspirants and

role occupants perceived their certification processes as worthless, a waste of time, hogwash, too repetitious, too theory oriented, and not practical.

A fourth method of competency development emerged from the interview data. This process previously referred to as developmental socialization, occurs once the aspirant captures the administrative position. No matter how well he has been prepared, the amount of past exposures with the administrative role, or the amount of completed course work, this process of developmental socialization will cause the new occupant to make various role adjustments. These adjustments and modifications will result in the formation of new role competencies and behavior.

One respondent noted that after two months in his first administrative position he was just learning how things really happened regarding political pressure, parental involvement, and similar aspects of the role. Another interviewee confirmed the idea that many administrators, as they take their first job become more serious, arrogant, and not-so-easy-going. He concluded that it "...must be the influence of the job on the individual." Perhaps this influence is best manifested by the following:

> "Administration is the hardest job there ever was. When you go into administration thinking its going to be easy, you're in for the hassle of your life, unless you're just deadwood." (subject #7)

The skills one learns or refines once he acquires his first administrative office varies, but those most often mentioned by interviewees are: teacher evaluation, cafeteria services, budgeting, staffing procedures, keeping attendance records, and making teacher duty schedules.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMPETENCIES. During the recorded interviews, the respondents were quizzed to determine the criteria used in their selection as administrators. Most respondents had obvious difficulties pinpointing or defining specific criteria by which they were judged competent for an administrative position. The general trend indicated that human relations skills (getting along with people) are considered as having most influence in their advancement. Mentioned most often as a necessary administrative skill is effective communication with others, such as with students, teachers, staff members, colleagues, parents, and the general public. Respondents mentioned other skills and personality traits, all of which enhance an administrator's ability to communicate; self-awareness, self-confidence, common sense, a sense of humor, fairness, understanding, patience, diplomacy, compromise, and

committment. Also important is a democratic leadership style embodying delegation of responsibility and authority, and the ability to gain the dedicated involvement of subordinates. Other crucial administrative skills mentioned were staff recruitment, evaluation, and motivation. Only a few respondents mentioned the more specific technical competencies such as record keeping, master scheduling, preparing and administering a budget, and curriculum development. The competent school administrator is seen as a statesman, or diplomat, able to mingle and function effectively with all segments of the population.

Besides a professional in human relations, the school administrator is also seen as a decision-maker who must respond effectively to both minor problems and potential crises on a regular basis. He must be able to recognize, analyze, and solve a wide assortment of problems. To increase his success in making effective decisions, the administrator must have the ability to conceptualize the whole organization as a sum of its individual parts. In the movement from teacher to administrator, the individual must broaden his perspective to visualize the total spectrum, the overall program, and his actions must benefit the whole rather than individual or special interests. The data suggests that in addition to meeting certain selection criteria, aspirants to administrative positions must also satisfy a requirement which seems universal

throughout organizations and bureaucracies—aspirants accepted into positions of leadership must "guarantee" system maintenance and perpetuation of the established order. The aspirant, to be accepted, must not represent a major threat to the established members and procedures. As a maintenance-oriented person he must demonstrate not only his committment to organizational goals, but also his dedication to play by the accepted "rules of the game." The following quotes emphasize the importance of this maintenance mechanism:

> "They chose me as superintendent because th[illegible] knew I would perpetuate what they had going, which was good, rather than chance someone coming in who would change things."
>
> "The previous principal...probably picked me because she felt I would continue her programs..." (subject #6)
>
> "When you get a job as a principal, if you don't rock the boat too much, you're guaranteed a job."

The control of recruitment and selection allows the inner fraternity to minimize sources of conflict and strain and maximize sources of organizational stability.

In summation, survey responses indicated that the successful aspirant must not only be skilled in the general areas of communication and decision-making, but he must also represent no threat to organizational stability. This evidence strongly suggests the hypothesis that the selection

criteria for school administrators is far more preoccupied with general individual personality-role characteristics than with demonstration of highly specialized skills or competencies.

CONCLUSIONS

How do school administrators become competent? How do school administrators internalize acceptable role behaviors, attitudes, and expectations? School Administrators learn "to play" their organizational role through a socialization process in which the role player merges his strengths and weaknesses with influences from repeated informal exposures to his school environment. Despite what many might think or hope, university training has played but a small role in the competency development process.

TRAINING RITUALS. A complex network of social processes exist as organizational avenues for aspirants to attain administrative positions. The social structures are better viewed as career rites for administrative aspirants and administrative personnel. As some of the aspirants pass through a series of these rituals they acquire role competencies as well as the position.

Passage from one situation to another, or from one social position to another, has been outlined by van Gennep as a series of rites. The rites of passage are subdivided into the rites of separation, rites of transition, and rites of incorporation. According to van Gennep, it is important to understand the transition process from

one social role to another as ritual patterns and ritual dynamics. He stated these ceremonial patterns to be complex, as the following quote indicates:

> "All these rites which have specific effective aims, occur in juxtaposition and combination with rites of passage and are sometimes so intimately intertwined with them that it is impossible to distinguish whether a particular ritual is, for example, one of protection or of separation."[17]

The ritual dynamics involved in the movement from teacher to administrator were analyzed in this study. Indications of the existence of ceremonial wholes—rites of separation, rites of transition and rites of incorporation—were identified easily from interview data.

Equally discernible were data that represent ritual dynamics. These rites that were identified from the data which provide support to role acquisition and to role competency development are the rites of administrative anticipation, rites of political support, rites of sponsorship, rites of organizational visibility, rites of merits, rites of certification, rites of modeling, rites of novitiate, and rites of internalization. These ceremonial patterns are the geneses of administrative competence. This career advancement model and its relationships are represented schematically in Figure III.

Order is a very important part of van Gennep's "rites of passage," that is, separation rituals occur prior to transition rituals, and so on. He does, however, indicate specific rituals related to the three major passage rites are dynamic and often are intricately complex.

FIGURE III. Schematic that Relates the Findings of School Administrators' Career Advancement Rituals to van Gennep's Model.

RITES OF PASSAGE	Rites of Separation	Rites of Transition	Rites of Incorporation
	(van Gennep)		
RITES OF CAREER ADVANCEMENT	(McCabe and Compton)		
	Rites of Role Aquisition	Rites of Role-Competency Development	
RITUAL PATTERNS	Rites of Administrative Anticipation Rites of Sponsorship Rites of Visibility Rites of Merit Rites of Political Support	Rites of Novitiate Rites of Certification Rites of Modeling Rites of Internalization	

The data presented suggest that there are two rites used by school administrative aspirants to advance their careers. Evidence has been presented which suggests the use of rituals for role acquisition and role-competency development. These two rites are inherently made up of many ritual patterns which enhance career advancement from teacher to school administrator.

The rites of role acquisition guide the aspirant in his quest for an administrative position. A secondary function of these rites is to support those rituals mainly concerned with competency development. When the data were scanned for ceremonies which offered the aspirant increased chances for job acquisition, five ritual patterns (see Figure III) were clearly identified.

Much interview and questionnaire data pointed toward rituals which involved anticipating and desiring an administrative position, thus symbolically separating from their teaching position. Ceremonial patterns involving sponsorship, visibility, merit and political support were outlined earlier. It should be noted that these ritual patterns, although collectively defining the rites of role acquisition, form numerous complex interactive systems for both role acquisition and competency development.

Other ceremonial patterns were identified from information collected. Many aspirants develop their administrative skills by performing administrative-like duties as department heads, and the like. These rituals are designated as the rites of novitiate. The practices and methods used by administrators to refine their skills once they are on the job are named the rites of internalization. The rites of certification and modeling were outlined in detail earlier in the text. These ceremonial patterns interactively form the rites of role-competency development. These nine ritual patterns are not considered exhaustive explanations of role acquisition and role-competency development, but they are considered major and significant.

COMPETENCIES. Seven broad areas were identified as important characteristics or skills that greatly enhance one's ability to administer a school program. They are: human relations, communication, knowledge of self, knowledge of role, a cohesive value system, tolerance for ambiguity, and high level critical thinking. These competencies are not listed in any particular order, nor are they considered the only important skills needed by administrators. The competencies, which emerged from the collected information, are briefly summarized below:

1. Human Relations - This includes skills that promote diplomacy, getting along with others, acuity for others' feelings, and being an effective representative agent for others.
2. Communication - The art of communication and its import to any organization for getting the job done is well documented. This art includes the ability to listen, as well as, speak and write with clarity. Communication exchanges which result in uncertainty can be disastrous to any administrator.
3. Knowledge of Self - Not only should school administrators be aware of their personal strengths and weaknesses, but they should also be aware of their personal goals. Self-awareness enables one to use his strengths to greatest advantage and to find adequate compensatory devices to offset his weaknesses. Self-awareness also produces self-confidence and a positive attitude.
4. Knowledge of Role - In order for one to perform his role in an acceptable manner, he must know the demands of the job, he must be aware of role expectations from his

role set, and he must have the specific administrative skills necessary to function effectively in the role.

5. Cohesive Value System - This concept refers to that foundation of one's being which influences their behavior from a value orientation. What are your core values? Where and how were they developed? Who had the most influence on their development? Those individuals with a cohesive system tend to exhibit directionality in their behavior; they are consistent and have more confidence in their decisions since they understand the basis of much of their behavior.

6. Tolerance for Ambiguity - This concept refers to the ability to operate under extreme pressure over extended periods, especially under circumstances which are uncertain or poorly defined. Often the administrator is thrust into unfamiliar situations which are not easily understood with respect to his past experiences. Fear or avoidance of the unfamiliar stifles creativity and innovation. The school administrator must

operate comfortably in unfamiliar situations and should eagerly consider new ideas and philosophies.

7. High Level Critical Thinking - This concept can best be described, as did the respondents in this study, by abjectives such as intelligence, synthesis, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, inference, induction and deduction. This competency enables the administrator to analyze problems and situations realistically, to synthesize various options for action, and to select the best possible alternative.

IMPLICATIONS

The results of this research demonstrate clearly that university training programs are highly ineffective in the competency development of school administrators. Certification requirements satisfied by university coursework represent in many cases more of a barrier to role acquisition than a mechanism for competency development. Since the informal modes of learning dominate the developmental process, and since some of the acting administrators are incompetent, the university must attempt to merge the best characteristics of the formal and informal modes of development. Classroom techniques and theory must be supported by field internship experiences in order to optimize quality control of sound and proven training techniques. Suggestions from respondents and analysis of the formal and informal rituals indicates that concentration must focus on the following areas:

1. University Courses - Present course offerings need to be reorganized so that the curriculum follows a natural order. Course additions and deletions should result in more continuity of learning, with definite objectives and prerequisites established. Repetition of course material must be

eliminated and more relevance must be added. Courses must concentrate more on the practical aspects of administration—the "how to do." Also, more course attention should center on personal improvement in the seven competency areas outlined previously.

2. Teaching Strategies - Additional teaching strategies such as gaming, role playing, simulation, CAI modules, and action research need to be stressed and combined with proven traditional techniques. Peer-group interaction must be emphasized through the use of group discussions and group projects. School visitations, participant observations, practicum courses, and field-oriented action research should familiarize the student with the demands and realities of the administrative role. The limitations of the traditional classroom must be overcome by continuous innovations in teaching techniques, methods, and practices.

3. Personnel - Teaching and administrative personnel should be professionals with extensive public school experience. They should have

frequent contact with the public schools to keep abreast of current developments. Students of administration should be exposed to active school administrators and to visiting professors with special administrative expertise.

4. General Suggestions - Those who design the university curriculum should keep in close touch with the public schools, and should remain familiar with current developments and advancements made by their professional colleagues around the world. The university should also attempt to provide a "community atmosphere" for graduate students in supervision and administration. More opportunities for socialization and interaction with peers, professors, and profesionals should be provided. Guidance and counseling should be easily available for students on a continuous basis. Facilities and instructional materials should be made easily accessible to students. The present library facilities need to include more resources specifically relating to school administration,

especially in the area of school law. The faculty should also promote greater use of the ERIC system currently available in the main library. And finally, professors and university administrators should solicit ideas and suggestions for improvement from graduate students and practicing school administrators.

5. Internships - The research indicates strongly that the implementation of "some form of" internship program would have the most significant influence on administrative competency development. Respondents favored an apprenticeship situation where on-the-job experiences could be coordinated under the guidance and supervision of teams comprised of professors and practicing administrators. These experiences should not be dominated by the tedium of routine administrative chores, but should offer the intern chances for challenge, responsibility, and authority. Consideration should be given to the possibility of a work-study program similar to those already instituted in other disciplines. A special task force of university professors and

administrators, public school administrators, and graduate students should be organized to determine the feasibility and design of an internship program in public school administration.

6. Further Research - Research-oriented individuals might give attention to the following questions: (1) Are there additional ceremonial rituals than those identified? (2) What are some of the stronger relationships between these rituals, that is, which set of rituals tend to mutually support career advancement? (3) Which rituals tend to interact and what is the nature of these interactions and their effect on career advancement and competency development? (4) What specific influences do some ritualistic patterns have on competency development, career advancement, role perception, and personality? (5) Are there identifiable sub-catagories of the ritual patterns described in this study? Finally, continued study is necessary to determine how universities can incorporate strong informal modes of skill development with a balanced practical-theoretical program geared toward major acceptable competencies.

FOOTNOTES

[1] A copy of the structured interview appears as Appendix A in this text.

[2] A copy of the mailed questionnaire used to collect data for this study appears as Appendix B in this text.

[3] Jerome J. Miller, "From Teacher to Principal: The Rites of Passage," (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1973), Albuquerque, New Mexico.

[4] Flora Ida Ortiz, "The Process of Professional Incorporation," (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1972), Albuquerque, New Mexico.

[5] Arnold van Gennep, The Rites of Passage, Translated by Monika Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee, (London: Routedge and Keagan Paul, 1960).

[6] Elliot D. Chapple and Carleton S. Coon, Principles of Anthropology, (New York: Henry Holt and Company., 1942).

[7] James G. March and Herbert A. Simon, Organizations (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.), pp. 83-111.

[8] Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, 1968 Enlarged Edition, (New York: The Free Press), p. 319.

[9] Ronald Blood, "The Functions of Experience in Professional Preparation: Teaching and the Principalship," (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Claremont Graduate School, 1966), Claremont, California.

[10] Daniel Griffiths, et. al., "Teacher Mobility in New York City," Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 1 (1965), pp. 15-31.

[11] Robert L. Rose, "Career Sponsorship in the School Superintendency," (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oregon, 1969), Eugene, Oregon.

[12] Miller, op. cit., p. 66.

[13] Ralph H. Turner, "Sponsored and Contest Mobility and the School System," American Sociological Review, Vol. 25, (December, 1960), pp. 855-867.

[14] Peter Maas, Serpico (New York: Bantam Books, 1973), p. 110.

[15] Ortiz, loc. cit.

[16] Dennis P. McCabe (Unpublished position paper entitled "Developmental Socialization as a Significant Mode of Internalizing the Principalship Role," 1972).

[17] van Gennep, op. cit., p. 12.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. To start off, I'd like to ask you some questions about your present position.

   A. What is your exact title?

   B. Briefly, what is the nature of your work?

   C. How many teachers do you supervise?

   D. Approximately, what is the ADA of your school district? - Of your school?

   E. How are most people in your community employed? (For example, construction, farming, etc.)

2. Now I would like to ask you some questions about your background.

   A. First, where were you born? SEX M F (Circle one)

   B. In what year?

   C. Where did you grow up?

   D. What was your father's occupation? Your mother's?

   E. How much education did they receive?

F. How many years have you been living in the Rio Grande Valley?

*Note: If arrival to RGV is recent (1 to 5 years), then find out where he came from & how he happened to choose the RGV.

3. Now, for some questions about your education:

A. Where did you go to high school?

B. College?

C. What was your major area of study in college?

D. What professional certificates/credentials do you have?

II. CAREER

1. Now, I have some questions about your career in education.

A. How many years have you been in education?

B. What positions have you held in education, starting with the first? Also, how long were you at each position?

_____ (____) _____ (____)

_____ (____) _____ (____)

2. I'd like to ask you some questions about how you became a principal.

A. Why did you become a principal?

B. What is your earliest recollection of being interested in becoming a principal?

C. In addition to teaching, what other school activities were you involved in just before you became a principal? (For example, club sponsor, dept. head, office duties without pay, etc.)

D. In retrospect, did these activities help you once you became an administrator? How?

F. What did you learn about being a principal from your former principal? (For example: on discipline, public relations, etc., also whether the experiences were good or bad)

III. PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

I'd like to turn your attention to your formal training as a principal.

1. How do you feel about graduate courses in school administration?

A. What were you doing when you took your first graduate courses in administration?

B. Have you taken university courses in administration since you became a principal? Why?

C. Which course(s) have been most helpful? Least helpful?

D. Do you feel your university courses prepared you for your administrative position? Why?

2. What helpful suggestions do you have for PNU to improve their administrator's program?

3. Which of the two - practical experience or coursework - has proven most valuable to you as a principal? Why?

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADMINISTRATORS

SECTION I

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Title of Current Position _____

School District (optional)_____

School District ADA_____School ADA (if assigned to a school)_____

Age____Sex: M__F__ Ethnicity: Mexican-American___ Other_____

Highest Degree Held_____Granting Institution_____

Year Granted _____ Major Area of Study _____

Father's Occupation_____ Mothers Occupation_____

How long have you lived in the Rio Grande Valley?_____

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

How long have you been in education?_____ Years as a teacher?_____

Years as a coach?_____ Years as an assistant principal?_____

Total Years as an administrator?_____ Years in this school district?

_____

PROFFESSIONAL ASPIRATION

Do you have either short or long range plans to change positions?_____

If yes, what is the title of the position(s) desired?_____

_____

In approximately what year did you first begin to think about becoming an administrator?_____ What was your position at the time?_____

In what year did you assume your first administrative position?_____

What was/is the title of your first administrative position?_____

Section II

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. In order to answer the question "Why do some individuals become administrators?" the following statements are offered. Examine them and place a checkmark (✓) in the blank next to those that you feel apply to you. There are no right or wrong answers. Please feel free to add other reasons if you desire.

1._____I knew I could keep the students, parents, the community, and the administration as happy as the next guy.

2._____I decided to become an administrator on my own, that is, no one suggested that I, or asked me to, pursue an administrative career.

3._____I decided to retire from my coaching career.

4._____I was talked into taking the position by a practing administrator. Until then I never seriously considered an administrative position. Actually I was sponsored.

5._____I felt I could contribute to the goals of education more as administrator. I felt I could keep the school or school district running smoothly and on target.

6._____I wanted a leadership position, where I could implement my ideas and programs. Our schools need to be changed in so many ways.

7._____I was attracted by the salary increase.

8._____Classroom teaching was not for me. I like children, but I felt as an administrator I could help all the children instead of a few.

9._____Better educational programs and materials are always being developed, and I felt that I could insure the adoption of these ideas in my school or school district.

10._____Other:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (Continued)

B. We at PAU are interested in how you, school administrators, feel about training programs for school administrators offered by universities. Place a checkmark ( ) at the beginning of each statement that indicates your agreement or disagreement.

Agree	Disagree	
____	_____	Generally, my university administration courses were most helpful.
____	_____	My university coursework contained too much theory which really has not helped me all that much on the job.
____	_____	My coursework tended to consis of the "nuts-and bolts" of administration, that is, memorization of check lists, good administrative principles, scheduling procedures, and the like.
____	_____	The school administration courses were very challenging.
____	_____	The courses were good; it's the professors that need to change.
____	_____	The best teacher of administration is experience.
____	_____	Some courses have really helped me.

C. What percantage of your administrative skills were acquired in university administration courses: (Circle one)

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

D. Most of what I know about my job I learned....

(Check only one)

1._____in my university course work.

2._____since I have become an administrator.

3._____in the public school setting before I became an administrator.

SECTION III

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

The following is a list of competencies with which school administrators are concerned to varying degrees. We at PAU are concerned with not only how competent you feel you are in these areas of administration, but also where you actually learned the skills which accompany these areas of administration.

Place a "J" in the blanks on the left if you feel that the degree of competency you have attained is mostly on the account of your "on-the-job experience." Place a "U" in the blank if you feel your competency level is due mostly to your "University training."

On the right side of the list there are choices that range from "Very Competent" to "Not Very Competent." For each competency area listed, please circle the "X" which you feel most nearly represents your idea of how you rate on the given topic.

There are no right or wrong answers so answer as you feel and believe. Feel free to add other competency areas.

U/J	List of Competency Areas	Very Competent	Competent	Somewhat Competent	Not Very Competent
___	Staff relations	X	X	X	X
___	Record keeping	X	X	X	X
___	TEA/USOE Regulations	X	X	X	X
___	Working with students	X	X	X	X
___	School law	X	X	X	X
___	Curriculum development	X	X	X	X
___	Public relations	X	X	X	X
___	School finance	X	X	X	X
___	Other:_____	X	X	X	X